

SECTION 1. Section 51.921, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (f) to read as follows:

(a) In addition to other fees authorized or required by law, the clerk of each district court, statutory county court, county court ~~[at law]~~, justice court, and municipal court shall collect a fee of \$25 from a person who:

(1) has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor; *and*

(2) *pays any part of a* ~~[has been ordered to pay a fine, court costs, or restitution by the court; and~~

~~[(3) seeks to pay the]~~ fine, court costs, or restitution *on or after the 31st day after the date on which a judgment is entered assessing the fine, court costs, or restitution [over a period of time rather than immediately].*

(f) *The comptroller may audit the records of a county or municipality relating to fees collected under this section.*

SECTION 2. (a) Except as provided by Section 3 of this Act, this Act takes effect September 1, 1999.

(b) Section 51.921, Government Code, as amended by this Act, applies only to an offense committed on or after September 1, 1999. An offense committed before the effective date of this Act is covered by the law in effect when the offense was committed, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect only if a specific appropriation for the implementation of this Act is provided in H.B. No. 1 (General Appropriations Act), Acts of the 76th Legislature, Regular Session, 1999. If no specific appropriation is provided in H.B. No. 1, the General Appropriations Act, this Act has no effect.

SECTION 4. The importance of this legislation and the crowded condition of the calendars in both houses create an emergency and an imperative public necessity that the constitutional rule requiring bills to be read on three several days in each house be suspended, and this rule is hereby suspended.

Passed the Senate on May 10, 1999, by a viva-voce vote; passed the Hcuse on May 26, 1999, by a non-record vote.

Approved June 18, 1999.

Effective September 1, 1999.

## CHAPTER 1180

### S.B. No. 272

#### AN ACT

relating to regional water planning groups.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:*

SECTION 1. Section 16.053, Water Code, is amended by amending Subsection (c) and adding Subsections (l) through (o) to read as follows:

(c) No later than 60 days after the designation of the regions under Subsection (b) ~~[of this section]~~, the board shall designate representatives within each regional water planning area to serve as the initial coordinating body for planning. The initial coordinating body *may* ~~[shall]~~ then designate additional representatives to serve on the regional wator planning group. *The initial coordinating body shall designate additional representatives if necessary to ensure*, ~~ensuring~~ adequate representation from the interests comprising that region, including ~~[but not limited to]~~ the public, counties, municipalities, industries, agricultural interests, environmental intorests, small businesses, electric generating utilities, river authorities, wator districts, and water utilities. *The regional water planning group shall maintain adequate representation from those interests.*

*(l) A political subdivision may contract with a regional water planning group to assist the regional water planning group in developing or revising a regional water plan.*

*(m) A cause of action does not accrue against a regional water planning group, a representative who serves on the regional water planning group, or an employee of a political subdivision that contracts with the regional water planning group under Subsection (l) for an act or omission in the course and scope of the person's work relating to the regional water planning group.*

*(n) A regional water planning group, a representative who serves on the regional water planning group, or an employee of a political subdivision that contracts with the regional water planning group under Subsection (l) is not liable for damages that may arise from an act or omission in the course and scope of the person's work relating to the regional water planning group.*

*(o) The attorney general, on request, shall represent a regional water planning group, a representative who serves on the regional water planning group, or an employee of a political subdivision that contracts with the regional water planning group under Subsection (l) in a suit arising from an act or omission relating to the regional water planning group.*

SECTION 2. The changes in law made by Subsections (m) through (o), Section 16.053, Water Code, as added by this Act, apply only to a cause of action that accrues on or after the effective date of this Act. A cause of action that accrued before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the date the cause of action accrued, and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 3. The importance of this legislation and the crowded condition of the calendars in both houses create an emergency and an imperative public necessity that the constitutional rule requiring bills to be read on three several days in each house be suspended, and this rule is hereby suspended, and that this Act take effect and be in force from and after its passage, and it is so enacted.

Passed the Senate on March 25, 1999: Yeas 31, Nays 0; passed the House on May 26, 1999: Yeas 144, Nays 0, two present not voting.

Approved June 18, 1999.

Effective June 18, 1999.

## CHAPTER 1181

### S.B. No. 315

#### AN ACT

relating to authorizing the use of certain prepaid tuition contracts to cover an additional period of attendance at an institution of higher education or attendance at a proprietary school.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:*

SECTION 1. Section 54.6001, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.6001. **PUBLIC PURPOSE.** An educated population being necessary to the social development and economic health of this state, the legislature finds and declares it to be an urgent public necessity to assist young Texans in obtaining a higher education. Because the state's population is rapidly growing and is diverse, the state is required to use all of the higher education facilities and resources within the state, both public and private, to provide a wide variety of educational environments and instructional options and to preserve the partnership between the state and private or independent institutions of higher education and between the state and proprietary schools, as defined by Section 132.001, that offer a two-year associate degree as approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Therefore, the prepaid higher education tuition program is established to help Texas students attend the institution that best meets their individual needs.

SECTION 2. Section 54.601, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.601. **DEFINITIONS.** In this subchapter: